

Education as a Driver for Change

Part 2



Enthusiasm for education!

Basic Education - Validation

Results and reflections from new trial courses for educationally disadvantaged people in Europe

Manual 2

Contents

1. Part 1: General Information and Introduction	Page 4
2. Part 2: Country Reports	Page 9
3. Part 3: Description of the Validation Instruments	Page 20
4. Part 4: Key Points from the Evaluation Report	Page 24
5. Part 5: Recommendations for Good Practice	Page 28
6. Part 6: Conclusions	Page 31
7. Part 7: Appendices	Page 33

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Part 1

General Information and Introduction

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The main aim of the **in.education** project is to increase the enrolment in education of educationally and socially disadvantaged people where access hasn't been made via the usual channels. Three different strategies have been developed and tested. The results will be summarized and presented. The products are intended to contribute to the further professionalisation of adult education.

Strategy 1:

Aims to activate new multipliers or intermediaries from the social environment of educationally disadvantaged people, which is a major influence on entering an educational process. **in.education** develops special training for the new multipliers to raise awareness, to help them to understand the importance of their role and to support them in becoming active within their own social environment.

Strategy 2:

When it comes to education, people think mostly in terms of formal schooling including degrees and certificates, or completing an apprenticeship. The main aim of this strategy is to acknowledge informal competences, non-formal and informally achieved skills and knowledge from the everyday life of socially and educationally disadvantaged adults. The recognition of those skills will empower socially and educationally disadvantaged adults and lead to better participation in educational processes.

Strategy 3:

This strategy is aimed at employees of adult education organisations. We take a closer look at implementation systems in adult education and analyze how they are matched to the needs of socially and educationally disadvantaged adults. We analyze already existing offers for educationally disadvantaged groups and compare them with the findings of current science and research.

To provide access to new learning opportunities and to create a stimulating learning context is the focus of the transnational partnership **in.education** with the following partner institutions:

ISOP – Innovative Sozialprojekte GmbH

Dreihackengasse 2, 8020 Graz, Austria



Campaign for Learning, United Kingdom

24 Greencoat Place Westminster, London SW1P 1RD



Galway and Roscommon Education & Training Board

An Coiléar Bán, Athenry, Co. Galway, Ireland



Zentrum für Soziale Innovation, Austria

Linke Wienzeile 246, 1150 Wien, Austria



The empowerment of people in diverse societies to step into lifelong learning is one of the important roles of adult education.

in.education faces this task through the above mentioned three strategies:

- o **Strategy 1**

Attract and activate new multipliers (persons from the social environment of educationally disadvantaged people)

- o **Strategy 2**

Overcome participation barriers and promote learning and training activities

- o **Strategy 3**

Promote innovation and quality at an organisational level

in.education

creates a manual on each of the three strategies. Based on the experiences of the project, these manuals aims to inspire the work of those involved in adult education.

Educationally disadvantaged people

have, as a result of one or several factors, no or limited access to education. The conventional categories of description such as gender, age, ethnicity, health impairment, unemployment or social affiliation are no longer enough to capture the whole group of those affected. Other factors need to be considered, such as a learner friendly environment, empowerment of individuals and the support available for people during the learning process.

This is related to the changing dynamic of European societies: the economic, financial and labour markets, the socio-political patterns and priorities, on which political measures are focused. In recent years this has led to a growing rate of educational disadvantage.

With regard to the participation rate of adults in training and education, disadvantaged groups often tend to live in restricted environments. These may be social environments in which education traditionally has less significance than in others. However, they may also include those who disengaged with formal education due to increasing socioeconomic pressure.

The aim of **in.education** is to accompany people on their way from a disadvantaged to a non-disadvantaged position, and to work in an appropriate and supportive manner to reach this goal.

For further information about educationally disadvantaged people please take a look at manual 1 which can be downloaded from any of the following links:

www.isop.at/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/in.education-...-as-a-driver-for-change.pdf

www.gretb.ie/furthereducation/erasmus

www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk/cfl/Projects/in_education.asp

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Part 2

Country Reports

Content, Examples, Methodology

Enthusiasm for education!

Introduction

in.education assumes that there is a mix of different strategies needed to open up education opportunities for educationally disadvantaged people. In our first strategy we trained people from the social environment of educationally disadvantaged people, and prepared them for their role as new intermediaries/multipliers. We were interested in finding out to what extent the new multipliers could motivate and activate educationally disadvantaged people. Strategy 2 addresses educationally disadvantaged people themselves.

The idea of this innovative educational format is to empower people to drive self-determined change. People gain self-confidence, and the desire and motivation to continue learning increases when they can evaluate and document their formally and informally acquired skills. This helps to recognise the own state of knowledge. The subject of inquiry for the **in.education** team was to what extent making this kind of offer available can increase participation in education.

in.education developed and tested curricula that would evaluate and recognise the informally acquired skills of educationally disadvantaged people with basic skills needs in each partner country. The recognition process varied due to specific individual needs and the educational goals of the participants. Topics and contents during the training followed identified needs that were determined by the participants themselves.

Austria



1. Outreach Activities

- Written information to all new multipliers trained during the first phase of **in.education**.
- Written information to all relevant project partners (organisations, individuals)
- Contacting possible new intermediaries, not contacted so far and not trained during phase 1 (e.g. migrant support organisations)
- Further information if requested

Necessary conditions / arrangements

- Info-sheet in easy to read language containing information about the training (start, duration, hours, contents, goals, addressed target groups etc.)
- Clarification and analysis of given information. Who will be informed for what reason and where are potential partners we haven't cooperated with so far
- Availability to answer inquiries
- Defined registration procedure

2. Information and Access

- 2 information days with a break of 1 week. This break gave the potential participants the opportunity to think about the offer and come to a decision whether this was an appropriate training opportunity for them or not. Furthermore, this break gave the opportunity to formulate any questions arising
- Guarantee that Participation is Voluntary. This means that a: "No" from interested people is acceptable. In such a case we offered guidance to try to find a more suitable offer. We did not ignore people who did not wish to join the course
- Participants decide about their own participation. This way, they decide themselves whether they have basic skills needs or not (eg. principles of self-determination and participation)

Necessary conditions / arrangements

- Detailed information regarding the planned offer that meets the needs of people who want to improve their basic skills. This is the prerequisite for self-determined decision-making. Methods and practices that are used later during the training are demonstrated, making the planned offer perceptible for the participants. Completed practice sheets can be stored to show the individual development of each participant at the end of the programme
- An explicit identification of the target group following priorities. This is necessary in case the training programme should be overbooked and the educational institution must make a selection of participants
- Plan resources for individual counselling, eg. alternative counselling, clarification of individual participation conditions

3. Participants

Educationally disadvantaged men and women

- with missing competences in literacy or numeracy
- who have compulsory schooling as their highest educational experience
- who cannot cope with new learning standards
- who have a negative self-perception as a learner
- who have given up hope of taking part in further education
- who may have low language skills levels in German
- who have no opportunities to take part in appropriate educational offers

Actual participants

- 16 people, 10 women + 6 men, 14 with migrant history
- From 9 different countries of origin, 5 from Europe, but not within the EU
- 10 participants had not finished compulsory school; 4 people had no school experience at all; 5 people were in work
- Age: 3 people under 20 years, 7 people between 50 – 70 years, 6 between 30 and 40 years

4. Structure of Training

- 2 parallel groups with 8 participants each, studying for 10 hours a week each on 2 days for 5 hours per week (9:00 -14:00) over a duration of 8 weeks
- Compulsory attendance, since participation is voluntary and participants have chosen the course themselves. If they are missing, then they have to make up the work they have missed
- Training language is German

Necessary conditions/arrangements

- 1 fixed training room, that becomes over time the “participants’ room”. Participants form the room with their own photos, posters, presentations.... so they are surrounded by their own progress
- 1 fixed trainer – guarantees continuity
- Attendance list which will be signed by the participants
- Creating a folder with various structured documents

5. Contents

- Group finding ways to create a basis of trust for the training course (portraits / participants’ gallery, exchange of hobbies, getting familiar with each other’s names...). This includes also deciding on group rules for the training course, suggested and confirmed by the participants
- Work on the term “learning”: planned and coincidental learning / formal and non formal learning, implicit knowledge, learning locations and contexts, especially those outside the educational system
- Work on their learning biography: What did I learn? Where, how and when? What positive and negative experiences did I have?
- Get familiar with different learning styles. What learning type am I?
- Work on experiences in jobs and/or educational processes. Extract activities and describe them. What learning effects can be seen? What kind of competences/skills/abilities did I develop? At the end I can talk about my experiences and other participants can understand
- Work on a curriculum vitae
- Working on goals: learning goals, goals in life, professional goals in 2 weeks / 1 month /1 year including detailed planning and describing steps that take them there
- The work on these topics lead into training in literacy and numeracy, communication,

presentation, organisation, listening, asking questions, reflection, decision-making, ICT, etc.

Necessary conditions /arrangements

- Chronologically planned content structure with clear targets
- Use of participant-orientated materials, created during the training
- Clear and transparent goal definition (eg. from intense guided structure to self-determined work)
- Creating good learning and working conditions. Transparency, exchange on a regular basis, introductory exercises to increase concentration, etc.

6. Methods

- Variety of individual, pair and teamwork
- Individual and group presentations including an exchange of experiences
- Use of storytelling methods, e.g. drawing, writing, symbols, photos, collages
- “Classical” learning such as dictation or numeracy exercises starting in the morning. Confidence gained through repetition
- Give and take feedback, working on the self-perception through feedback from the learning group after presentations
- Securing the results in the participants’ folders

Necessary conditions / arrangements

- Variety of methods to address the different learning styles
- Trainer also talks about himself/herself and makes this visible, thereby learning on an equal footing
- Analysing of mistakes together with the trainer. By doing this the tutor doesn’t forget to show the participant’s development to encourage him/her
- There is no ready-made material. Developing of course material has to be taken into account in planning

7. Results

- Detailed, competence- descriptive curriculum vitae
- Folder/portfolio (overview, progress of course, self-assessment of own learning steps)
- Confirmation of participation
- Further education plan

Necessary conditions / arrangements

- Ongoing documentation of results by the trainer to ensure the validation of results and the follow-up steps of the participants

IRELAND



Introduction:

Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board ran two distinct training programmes for participants with a very broad age range, diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, nationalities, languages and educational backgrounds. It was intended to target the 16-24 year old demographic. However, through working with the multipliers, the need became apparent to look at a broader age range. As the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competences (PIAAC) 2012 evidenced, 12.9% of those in the 16-24 demographic have a literacy level at or below level 1, compared to 27.8% of the 55-65 demographic, in Ireland. Therefore those identified by the multipliers in the 25+ age group were included in the study.

Group 1

The participants in the first group were identified through one of our multipliers, North Galway Learning Network. There were a number of organizations sitting on this network and through one of these multipliers we were able to engage with other multipliers e.g. Galway City Partnership and a number of Community Developments workers. As a result of this 14 learners were referred through these agencies: 12 females and 2 males of which 8 commenced. Of the 6 that did not take up a place on the course, 3 were relatives that had a family bereavement, 1 decided the course was not for them, and we have no information on the remaining 2.

Those who started were all females ranging from 32 years to 58 years of age. 3 of the participants were from Ireland with the balance coming from Algeria, Angola, Egypt, Poland and Democratic Republic of the Congo. Of the 5 from other countries, all were living in Ireland long-term, for between 9 and 15 years, but had not completed any education or training in Ireland.

The mother tongues of the participants were Arabic, English, Lingala, Polish and Portuguese. 6 participants had completed some part of lower secondary school, 1 has compulsory school leaving certificate in another country and 1 other had attended some further training.

7 of the 8 were mothers with children of varying ages from toddlers to adulthood. Regardless of family status, each was the primary carer for their children. This proved to have a major impact on their educational goals in terms of what they wanted to do and availability to complete same.

Programme:

An 80 hour taster programme was developed. The course ran over three mornings per week in blocks of three or four hours, depending on what was to be covered on any given day.

The aim of this programme was to help the participants identify their learning needs and also prepare them to engage in future/further provision.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this programme the learner will:

Be able to make better decisions through understanding core learning in personal effectiveness

Understand learning to learn and goal setting

Improve their communication skills

Be able to make informed decisions on the educational opportunities through visits to various training and adult education centres in the locality

Gain an insight into various skills through taster programme workshops

Become aware of their own abilities

Content:

The workshops included Learning to Learn, Personal Development, Team Building, DIY, Music, Art, Horticultural, IT Skills, Photography, Cookery, Money Management, Hair and Beauty, Child Care,

Bike Maintenance and Health and Fitness. There was one coordinating tutor who met the learners most days and subject specific tutors for other workshops.

Feedback:

Participants were to evaluate each module as excellent, very good, good or poor. The group usually had similar views. Most modules were well received. Team Building was the most favoured because it gave an insight into group dynamics and helped the participants to understand their roles in class, family and other groups. The group were particularly disinterested in Drug Awareness and did not attend that day.

The group were looking forward to Child Care/Elder Care and were very disappointed by the module as they hoped it would give them some practical tips to help in their role as primary carers. However, it was very theory based, aiming to give participants an insight into this area of work and how to gain accreditation.

Some of the participants were from particularly socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds and felt that the advice on Money Management was inappropriate.

Participants found the site visits particularly beneficial. It removed a barrier for the students continuing their learning in the education centres they visited and also gave them an insight into other educational opportunities.

Methodology:

In our experience offering taster programmes, covering a variety of topics proves more effective at attracting those who are educationally disadvantaged to reengage with the educational system. It offers something of interest to each participant and an opportunity to experience a variety of classroom settings and teaching styles. Each participant would have a unique skill set and this type of course allows them to demonstrate their strengths and improve any weaknesses.

The programme was run from the local community resource centre which offers many supports to the diverse population in this socioeconomically disadvantaged area. The resource centre is not an education provider but is easily accessible and there is no stigma attached to attending a course being run there.

Group 2

The participants were identified through one of our multipliers, Gréasán na Gaeltachta. This multiplier is from the Gaeltacht, the Irish speaking regions of Ireland. One of these Gaeltacht regions is in Co. Galway and therefore part of the GRET B area. The education provision within the Gaeltacht is through the medium of Irish but most living in the Gaeltacht also communicate through English.

12 learners were referred from the multiplier of which 6 were females and 6 males, with all commencing the training programme. Of the participants 9 were from Ireland, 2 were from the United States of America and 1 was from Russia. The age group of this group was 16-18. All had completed part of their education in Ireland, none had achieved compulsory school leaving certificate. There is a mix of Irish and English spoken as the primary language.

Programme:

An 80 hour media programme was developed and delivered through the medium of Irish. The course ran over two, five hour days, per week. It was run by one tutor with a background in media and adult basic education. In the Gaeltacht the main opportunity for employment is in the media sector; Radio na Gaeltachta and TG4, the national radio and television stations through the medium of Irish, both have their headquarters in this Gaeltacht. There is also a soap opera "Ros na Rún" filmed in this area and a number of other productions.

The aim of this programme was to help the participants engage in future/further provision through a media themed course. To give the participants an insight into the different roles within the media industry and to produce a short film from an idea.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this programme the learner will:

Gain a better understanding of *behind the scenes* in a small production

Improve team building skills through working on a common goal with various roles.

Improve their understanding of the technology used in production and editing

Be able to brainstorm and develop an idea into a storyline

Be able to create a script and story board

Understand the function of casting

Understand the roles of producers, directors and crew

Become aware of their abilities

Content:

The group had to work together to brainstorm an idea, write a script and create a story board. Once the idea had been developed, the group had to select the cast, assign the roles of director, producer, cameraman, sound engineer etc. Each participant had to take responsibility for their role in the overall production. The short film was shot at the site of the 2015 movie '*An Klondike*', a TG4 production.

Feedback:

The participants particularly enjoyed the non-academic nature of the course which was unlike any education they had experienced previously. They had to assume responsibility for their particular role if the group's goal was to be achieved, which they found empowering. Doing this activity in this way allowed the group to develop as a team and they realized the importance of working as part of a team rather than as individuals. This developed the autonomy to complete a short film from inception to end. The course highlighted, to the participants, the variety of roles in media. Some participants had dismissed media as an area of interest for them, for study or work, as they thought it was all front of camera. Many have a new found interest in further studies in this area as they discovered roles in media that they particularly liked but were unaware even existed previously. The learners were appreciative of being trusted with expensive equipment. The participants were so enthralled by the material that some chose to work on it outside course hours.

Methodology:

This course was very hands on with only minimal theory covered to be able to complete the task. This was contrary to previous educational experience which was heavily theoretical.

It also had a non-traditional setting with some of the work taking place in the field and editing then in computer labs. The methodology incorporated various teaching styles. It offers something of interest to each participant as media is one of the main employers in the Gaeltacht. Each participant demonstrated a unique skill set and this course allowed them to demonstrate their strengths and improve any weaknesses.

United Kingdom



1. Partnership Approach

For this stage of the programme we wished to work intensively with disadvantaged individuals with few or no formal educational qualifications recognised in the UK, building their confidence and skills and helping them identify skills they had developed through informal and non-formal learning.

The Campaign for Learning is a national body that does not normally deliver directly to adults, so we identified a local partner working closely with disadvantaged participants to help us. A social housing provider in the North West of England, near Manchester, wanted to help residents in its properties improve their skills and prospects, and saw this as a good opportunity. Some residents were severely disadvantaged and vulnerable, and nervous about learning. The trusting relationships that residents had with housing staff, and their familiar, safe, comfortable building where we could run the courses, were both very important in reassuring participants and encouraging them to attend.

2. Planning the Courses

We agreed with our housing partner that our courses were best targeted at people who wanted to find work, although they pointed out that some residents were still a long way from achieving this. Many residents were nervous about education or had bad experiences at school, so we agreed to focus on learning with a view to work, rather than with a view to progressing in education, though we hoped participants would do this too once they gained confidence and overcome their anxieties.

This also offered more realistic opportunities for our learners to progress, as funding cuts over the last two years in the UK have greatly reduced adult education provision, but directly work-related learning has tended to be protected. We agreed to run:

- A 'Ready to Work' course with disadvantaged residents who had prospects of finding work, to help them identify their skills, build new ones and gain some realistic work experience
- A 'Ready to Volunteer' course with residents who were vulnerable and needed extra support. Most had never worked and had little or no positive experience of learning, but were interested in volunteering to build up experience in a work environment. This would be an introductory course incorporating some volunteering experience.

3. Recruitment and Outreach

We undertook recruitment for the courses alongside our social housing partner. We:

- Visited potential participants and encouraged them to tell their friends and neighbours
- Shared information through other partner organisations in the area (such as Remploy, an employment organisation that supports people with disabilities into work)
- Ran 3 drop-in information sessions at the centre where the courses would be running
- Followed these up with texts, phone calls & reminders in the week before the courses

As many potential participants did not have good literacy in English, we did not produce written promotional materials, preferring to using 'word of mouth', though we did use text messaging, as this was a familiar and trusted approach for most of our participants. We identified about 20 people who expressed an initial interest, 16 of whom left their details and said they would attend.

4. The Participants

On the first week, we recruited 5 participants for the Ready to Work group and 7 for the Ready to Volunteer group. 2 further RtV participants joined later, making 14 participants in all. Participants were mixed in age and background. We were pleased that a few participants came because they had heard about the course from another participant, proving the value of a 'word of mouth' approach.

Ready to Work group: This was formed of 4 women and one man, aged between 19 and over 40. Two participants were migrants (from Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo respectively), one was an Asian heritage British woman and two were white British women whose first language was English. One participant had learning difficulties and one suffered health problems.

Ready to Volunteer group: This comprised 4 British men of Asian background, one female migrant from Pakistan in her late 20's, 2 white British women and a white British married couple, all in their 50s. Several learners suffered physical or mental health problems and two had learning difficulties.

5. Structure and Content

Once participants for each course were identified, we negotiated timings for the courses. Several participants had caring responsibilities for school-age children, so it was agreed that the sessions would take place within the school day (9.30 – 3pm). We arranged care for one participant's pre-school age child through the project, as she would not have been able to attend without this.

Housing colleagues felt participants would not attend for 2 days a week and that 8 weeks of full-day sessions, with work for participants to do at home between sessions, would be the best balance. Both groups would spend 5 weeks in group sessions, followed by two full days on a placement (work experience or volunteering experience) and then a 'debrief' final session all together.

Working at home was difficult for some learners because of their home situation or because of poor literacy skills in English. We tried to overcome this by using materials which involved little reading, and starting each week's session with an icebreaker discussion on the materials for work at home, followed by a recap of the previous one. This helped even participants who had not completed all the work at home to keep up with the course and build their confidence.

6. Methods and Materials

All the participants wanted to obtain paid work, so learning materials had to have a clear focus on identifying and developing work-related skills. Commercially available and internet-based materials to develop employability skills were mainly aimed at school leavers with a good education, while a few were tailored for students with serious learning difficulties which our learners might have found insulting. Almost all available materials assumed good literacy and fluency in spoken English. So we developed or adapted materials specifically for these groups we were working with.

'Classroom' sessions took the form of group discussion around the tutor's prompts, and individual work on an Individual Learning Plan, a CV and self-assessment and skills development materials. Using validation materials as 'prompts' for informal discussion, rather than as 'assessments', worked well, building up learners' confidence gradually. Building up a supportive ethos in each group was essential, particularly as the participants came from such varied backgrounds and experiences.

In the final session, participants reviewed their Individual Learning Plans and received feedback on their achievements from the course tutor and housing colleagues. All had a 1:1 meeting with staff to plan their progress and draw up a Gantt chart / timeline of their next steps. All received a certificate with comments on their achievements and were asked for their feedback on the course.

7. Results

The courses generally went well, but unsurprisingly with such vulnerable participants, attendance was patchy, with some sessions involving only two participants. However, this very small group size did allow for intensive individual work that would be impossible in publicly-funded adult education. It was encouraging that participants returned after the Christmas break, and 2 new learners who had registered previously, but not attended due to health problems, joined the RtV course in January.

It was encouraging to see participants begin to recognise skills they already had, as well as gain build confidence to consider possibly re-entering formal adult education. The practical experience days worked very well and were popular. Learner feedback showed that the chance to consider their strengths and skills in advance, and to discuss the expectations of the workplace in the group before undertaking the work / volunteering experience, was particularly valuable.

7 learners completed the course and placement by the beginning of February and 2 others were expected to do so a little later with extra support from the housing provider. (These were the 2 late additions to the RtV course, who required substantial support but were very keen to use the opportunity for volunteering experience and skills development.) At least 3 participants were successful in securing interviews for jobs, internships or apprenticeships while on the courses, which reflects their increased confidence in applying for and pursuing these opportunities.

8. What Worked Well

Our relationship with our social housing partner worked very well, and was vital to the success of our courses, because housing staff acted as trusted intermediaries, knew which residents might benefit from participating, provided a comfortable local venue for courses, assisted in arranging child care and placements, worked with other partners in the local area to share information about the courses and build progression routes for learners, and supported two particularly vulnerable learners who joined late to complete the course a little later with intensive help. This validates one original assumption of the **in.education** project: that close work with individuals from the immediate environment of disadvantaged learners can be highly effective in drawing them back into education.

The focus on work rather than directly on re-engaging in learning (which was seen by some learners as threatening) was important in encouraging participation. The practical work or volunteering experience was a key motivating factor for participants who might not have joined an entirely 'classroom-based' course, and definitely helped participants gain a more realistic idea of what work or volunteering entailed. This was confidence-building for most participants, who found they already had a range of skills and experiences that could help them in the work or volunteering situation.

9. What Worked Less Well

For severely disadvantaged adults, many with caring responsibilities or chronic health problems, maintaining attendance on full-day sessions over 8 weeks was challenging, and attendance did vary. It was difficult for some learners to complete work at home, although others completed everything. Housing colleagues believed participants would not have signed up initially for more than 8 weeks, however, and practical considerations meant that we could not run for more than 5.5 hours per day.

Finally, these learners were clearly motivated to obtain work, rather than directly re-engaging with education. Cuts to adult learning in the UK has made it more difficult to find opportunities for adults to continue their general education. In the past, we would have referred learners to local Colleges, Local Authorities and adult education providers, but now referrals more often happen via the public employment service. However, we were pleased that several of our learners fed back that they now had the confidence and motivation to join other courses to help them obtain work in future.

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Part 3

Description of the Validation Instruments

Austria

Validating commonly means checking, evaluating and documenting. The meaning and benefit of validation for educationally disadvantaged people is strongly connected to individual educational goals. The motivation of our target group to build up or improve their basic skills is always correlated with the desire to find a (better) job or to acquire a formal education. In the first place the results of validation processes are therefore always those that are accepted in the outside world. The internal effect of validation, that tells the participants themselves about their own competence levels, must not be underestimated. Sometimes this is actually the greatest benefit to the participants. They recognize an increase of self-esteem, determination or courage during the validation process.

Our validation instruments are based on face to face work, feedback from the learning group and trainer support and feedback.

To work on something autonomously, to present it in front of the group, to express and receive constructive criticism, to put results in a systematic order – all of this builds up listening / writing / reading and oral skills. This is basic skills learning in a direct sense.

The starting point is always the participant's own educational biography. The goal is to work on the presentation and make competences visible. These competences can be validated.

We concentrated on **three essential forms of documentation** to focus on different progression routes for participants

Progression route: labour market – detailed CV:

This is developed by the individual; the activities at different life stages are described in great detail; skills and abilities are derived and described from it; mostly it involves transferable skills that are demanded in various professions; participants learn to talk about their experiences and to identify their skills relevant to the vacancy; thereby their own confidence and self-belief increases.

Progression route: education – portfolio:

Course material will be put in a systematic order; course content and the learning process are documented; participants can show the changes and improvements that happened during the course; the portfolio makes their learning progress visible and proves his or her learning competence for outside parties.

Progression route: general – certificate of participation:

Besides participants' data such as duration and hours of attendance, the course contents are described, as well as the competences necessary to follow the course and to complete it.

It should be noted that in practice, these validation results have been shown to be very limited in their application. "Connectivity systems" have their own standardized admission processes. Competence descriptions provided by third parties are only used to complement their own results, but never replace them. This also shows a lack of transparency in the education system, which often uses entirely different assessment categories. Our validation process is focused on informal skills and makes plenty of everyday life skills visible. Shopping, handling money, selecting affordable products, purchasing special offers – all of these are not a problem for most of our participants in everyday life – but they cannot solve the same problems when they are embedded in a written problem in mathematics. This shows a failure of the task set by the education system, on a meta-language level, but not that the candidate is not capable of completing the task.

Ireland

The aim of validation in these programmes was to ensure a desired level of learner support, teaching and learning, achievement and participation was met. The validation instruments used were; face to face meetings to discuss progress throughout the programme, pre and post assessment of learner abilities, awarding of certificate acknowledging competences, portfolio of work completed/DVD, information on possible educational opportunities and continuous tutor feedback to learners and coordinators.

Face to Face Meeting:

Learners were met individually on each programme a number of times to discuss expectations, needs and how these were being met. Students were given the opportunity to evaluate the teaching and learning that was taking place. They contributed ideas to improve or adapt the programme as it developed. Individual learning plans were discussed and routes to achieving their educational goals were identified. The tutors gave constructive feedback to the participants throughout both programmes. The coordinating tutor met the learners all or most days, which gave the learner opportunity to express any issues or concerns and reflect on their learning. At the end they were asked to complete an evaluation of the overall programme and components. Please see appendix 1.

Pre and Post Assessment:

As part of the face to face meetings, a pre and post assessment of each learner was completed. Students were asked to rate themselves on a scale of 1-10 under the following: motivation, confidence, positive thinking, future education plan and life plan. There were obvious improvements. Please see appendix 1.

Certificate of Completion:

From the face to face meetings and pre and post assessments, competences were identified for each learner. These competences were recorded on their individual certificates of completion. This is standard practice in GRETB on successful completion of such courses. This is a formal recognition of the learners' abilities. Most learners would not have received such recognition previously and therefore it is valued by the learner. It demonstrates the learners' willingness to reengage in education and can be viewed as a first step on the road to compulsory school completion.

Portfolio of work / DVD:

The first programme covered a variety of workshops and each learner compiled a portfolio of the work covered. This was particularly relevant for some workshops e.g. Learning to Learn, Personal Development, Team Building, IT Skills, Photography, Cookery, Money Management and Health and Fitness. Each learner in group 2 was presented with a copy of the final production of their short film. The students were very proud of the quality of the production, given that they had no previous media experience. It was recognition of the time and effort that they put into the course. This could be used by the learners as part of a portfolio in the future to help access education or employment.

Information on possible educational opportunities:

As a result of the site visits to other educational centres a list of possible programmes was compiled for the participants from group 1.

United Kingdom

As both our groups of participants had a strong focus on obtaining paid or volunteer work, we concentrated in developing validation instruments on those that would help them to:

- Find appropriate work locally
- Find volunteering opportunities locally that might lead to work
- Gain access to adult apprenticeships
- Gain access to vocational courses to gain qualifications to help them obtain work
- Recognise, remember and celebrate their own skills, knowledge and aptitudes

Each learner was given a folder in which they stored worksheets and notes from the course sessions and work experience days but also documents that validated their experience.

Our courses were strongly work-focused and started with Individual Learning Plans detailing what participants hoped to gain from the course. These were then reviewed at the end of the course, including a self-assessment by the participant and positive feedback from the course tutor and the housing worker who had referred the individual. This formed part of the learner's folder of documents to take away.

Several documents were used to help learners move from where they saw themselves at the start of the course to where they wanted to be at the end of the course. These included an individual SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats), which participants completed for their own situation with support from the tutor, and a 'barriers' sheet where they identified what had stopped them from progressing in learning and work in the past, and what they planned to do to overcome these obstacles to move forward in future. An individual Gantt chart / timeline showed what the participant was committing to do each week. These were reviewed and renewed at the end of the course, with each participant going away with a timeline plan of actions for the succeeding few weeks after the end of the course. All of these were saved in learners' folders.

As part of the course, participants completed two days of work or volunteering experience. Their own reflections on this, and feedback from the supervisors in the settings they were working in, also formed part of their course folders.

Most importantly, participants worked on detailed CVs, amending and adding to these as they went through the course, to recognise skills and abilities they already had, confidence and skills they had developed, and the experience they had gained on the placement. Each participant took away a final detailed version of their CV as part of their course folder.

During the final session, participants all had a 1:1 meeting with the tutor when they were able to add final additions to their CV in light of her feedback. They were then presented with a certificate of attendance with positive comments highlighting their strengths, their contribution to the group and what they had gained during the course.

Finally, participants were also given written information about further courses available in the area to take away and discuss further with their housing association support workers after the course was completed, to help them focus on the question of 'What Next?'

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Part 4

Key Points from the Evaluation Report

The Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI) is one of the four partners of the *in.education* project. It is an independent social research institute based in Vienna in charge of the evaluation and scientific accompaniment of the project. In the framework of the second intellectual output of the project on which this product is based, ZSI was tasked with assessing the success of the training course based on indicators defined prior to the project implementation. Two of these indicators refer to the composition of the groups, whereas one indicator refers to the results of the training course at individual level. In a bid to measure the success of these training courses, data at the participant level was collected during the training courses. Socio-demographic data and data on the immediate results of the training course were also included. The short-term impact of the trainings will be evaluated by contacting the participants six months after their training. This will be done in order to determine whether the participants were able to put their planned educational activities into practice and whether they were able to observe any other changes in different aspects of the lives which could be credited to the *in.education* training courses.

This section of the product will briefly explain the success of the training courses based on the previously defined indicators.

General indicators:

INDICATORS	Austria	Ireland	United Kingdom	Total
At least 15 participants per country	16	20	14	50
2 groups per country	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6 groups
At least 70% of the participants should finish the training courses	75 %	100 %	50 % completed the regular training course 14% completed the training in an individual setting	78 %

Group composition:

INDICATORS	Austria	Ireland	United Kingdom	Total
At least 40% of the participants should have been reached through “new multipliers”¹	13%	100%	-	44%
Balance between male and female participants	Female = 10 Male = 6	Female = 14 Male = 6	Female = 8 Male = 6	Female = 32 Male = 18
Balance between migrants and non-migrants	88% (14/16) participants born abroad	40% (8/20) participants born abroad	21% (3/14) participants born abroad	50% (25/50) participants born abroad

Impact at an individual level:

INDICATOR	Austria	Ireland	United Kingdom	Total
At least 30% of the participants should continue participating in a training course after the training	58% (7/12) of the participants who finished the training course immediately joined other courses after the training. 33% (4/12) planned to join a basic skills training course in the near future. For one participant, no suitable training offer could be identified at the end of the training.	40% (8/20) of the participants who finished the training course immediately enrolled in other courses after the <i>in.education</i> training. All other participant plan to start pursue their compulsory school leaving certificate in 2016/2017.	29% (2/7) of the participants who finished the regular training course immediately enrolled in further educational activities.	44% (17/39) of all the participants who finished the training course immediately joined further educational activities. This is more than the required 14 participants out of 45.

¹ In the first phase of the project, workshops to sensitise persons in the social environment of educationally disadvantaged people were implemented. One objective of these workshops was to reach participants for the training courses through these “new multipliers”.

Another objective of the trainings was to assess during the course if the (informally or non-formally) acquired competences of the participants enable them to shorten their pathway to the completion of a mandatory school leaving certificate. In Austria, obtaining the mandatory school leaving certificate was not an immediate or short-term educational goal of the participants because they were for example very far from having the necessary competences or they already had the certificate. Also in the United Kingdom this was of little relevance as the participants had a stronger focus on finding employment rather than on obtaining formal qualifications. Nonetheless, 12 training participants in Ireland were interested in obtaining a school leaving certificate in future. Based on the validated competences of the participants however, it was not possible to shorten the participants' path to completing their mandatory school leaving certificate. However, what this process was successful in doing was to increase the participants' interest in (re)engaging with learning.

The full evaluation report includes more information and can be accessed and downloaded here: <https://www.zsi.at/de/object/project/3432>

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Part 5

Recommendations for Good Practice

Recommendations

To help educationally disadvantaged adults reengage with the education system, we would recommend:

Recruiting learners:

- Build up long-term relationships with trusted, locally-based partners, intermediaries and multipliers who can advise, support and assist with recruitment and progression into other learning and employment
- Establish precise criteria for the selection of participants. A clear definition of the criteria for educational disadvantage and how these match with the potential participants is essential
- Make sure participants have full information on the course and can make an informed decision about whether they wish to participate

Group size and composition:

- Small groups of 7-12 learners foster a supportive & helpful environment where participants can help each other when they run into difficulties
- Aim for heterogeneity in the group composition regarding age, native language, learning level and the highest possible gender parity as this promotes a good working environment. This can make the exchange of ideas and experiences more exciting, and also improve participants' mutual support and increase their awareness and self-esteem

Course design:

- Ensure that learning outcomes are relevant to the learners' social practice in the real world
- Develop courses that cover a wide variety of topics, or a single topic of interest to all the participants, to ensure they are engaged and maintain attendance so as to develop their basic skills. Sessions should be non-academic, but more practical and hands-on, as this will result in a more positive educational experience than the traditional methods. For learners with a focus on employment, a period of work experience can be beneficial
- Use a variety of methods. Start with very precise and easy to follow instructions; later on, the instructions and tasks can be formulated more openly to promote autonomous learning
- Remember that adult education needs a certain amount of flexibility, in the number of hours provided per week, timing of same and methodologies used. Shorter, more focussed non-accredited courses can be a good way to start
- Encourage work at home as a complementary booster activity for those who can manage it

Setting and relationships:

- The venue is key to attracting and keeping participants. It needs to be non-threatening, welcoming, accessible and comfortable. Educationally disadvantaged learners are less likely to engage with courses run from a school environment
- Continuity is very important in generating a feeling of security. Continuity of personnel, such as regular contact with a co-ordinating tutor, continuity in the learning space and continuity in learning processes all help to build self-esteem
- Engaging family members in the learning process may, if appropriate, support the learner in achieving their goals
- Team building sessions can help learners identify their roles and work as a team with a common goal; to complete the programme and return to further education. This can help mixed groups to form a bond and build their interpersonal competences

- Participants and trainers should meet on equal footing, and learners should be listened to and their input valued

Validation:

- If participants want to move on to a formal course, a well structured and competence-orientated portfolio is very important
- An individualised record that describes participants' skills is valuable for learners to recognise and reflect on their own skills and abilities, and to facilitate their progression in both learning and work

Progression:

- Progression opportunities should be identified, regardless of whether the participant's goal is to continue their formal education, to find a job or to follow up an interest
- Including site visits and contact with other education providers, course tutors or careers advisers toward the end of the programme may help participants identify and move on to further educational opportunities

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Part 6

Conclusion

Conclusion

1. **Recruiting Learners:** Trusted local multipliers or intermediaries are very important in drawing in learners as they have an existing relationship with potential participants.
2. **Voluntarism:** The most effective learning occurs when participants voluntarily access a course. This is more successful than when people are mandated to attend.
3. **Individualised Programmes:** Programmes that are designed to meet the needs, engage the interests and build up the skills of a specific group of learners to meet the demands of everyday life work better than generic programmes.
4. **Participation:** Disadvantaged learners are able to participate in learning for more hours per week than often expected, if the offer is flexible, relevant and supportive, and outside agencies or circumstances do not prevent this.
5. **Setting:** Disadvantaged adults engage better when the setting is non-threatening and not stigmatised, but rather familiar, comfortable and accessible.
6. **Trust:** A trusting relationship of adult peers between learners, and between them and the tutor, is vital for engagement and progression. If learners feel comfortable with each other, identify with others, work together and support each other they are more likely to succeed. It is worth taking the time to build up a good dynamic within the group at an early stage so they can work together to achieve their common goal.
7. **New Methods:** It is important for educationally disadvantaged adults to have the chance to learn in new ways which are different from traditional school education. Tutors must be aware of the challenges learners are facing and willing to keep abreast of new technologies and innovative up-to-date techniques. This updating should be fully supported and promoted by their organisations.
8. **Practical Focus:** Practical work is more interesting, engaging and motivating for adults with poor basic skills than theory alone: "It is better to achieve at painting a picture than fail at writing a story". An unaccredited practical course can meet learners' needs, and also help them develop an interest in taking part in other learning in future.
9. **Validation:** Some type of recognition of learners' skills is important for building self-esteem and may be used as a passport for next steps in education or employment.
10. **Progression:** It is vital that ongoing support systems for learners after the end of the course are identified towards the end of the course, and opportunities for progression are seen as an integral part of the course.

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Part 7

Appendices

Austria

Sample Curriculum Vitae

PHOTO

<p>Personal Information</p> <p>Date of Birth Family Nationality Access to the Labour Market Entry to Austria</p>	<p>First name Last name Address Postcode, City Telephone E-Mail</p> <p>Date, Place and Country of Birth</p> <p>DD/MM/YYYY</p>
<p>Professional and Extra-Professional Experience</p> <p>Period of Time Position and Company Important Activities Experiences and Gained Skills</p>	<p>YYYY - YYYY Chicken Farm, self-employed Rearing chicken, feeding and medical care, monitoring Acquisition of knowledge, decision-making skills, autonomy, taking responsibility, organizing processes, development of a systematic approach</p>
<p>Period of Time Position and Company Important Activities Experiences and Gained Skills</p>	<p>YYYY - YYYY Agricultural force in the family-business, Forestry work (cutting down trees, pruning, planting), Fieldwork (sowing, plowing, harvesting) digging wells Physical hard work, flexibility, takeover of agriculture after the death of his father in the year YYYY</p>
<p>Education and Training</p> <p>Period of Time Name and Type of School Acquired Qualification and Certificate</p>	<p>YYYY - YYYY School attendance Without certificate</p>
<p>Period of Time Contents Name und Type of Training Centre</p>	<p>YYYY- Present Literacy, basic skills and GESOL with Caritas, ISOP, ÖIF (see confirmation of participation, certificates)</p> <p>Migration x-month flight over Iran, Greece and the Balkan</p>

Explanatory Note

First name last name has found himself until recently in the uncertain status of an asylum seeker

First name last name has...

- learned to write, read and comprehend
- shown reliability in the voluntary participation in the training programme
- demonstrated great willingness to learn

...during the years of his stay in Austria.

The learning speed corresponds to the learning socialization.

ISOP – in.education

DD/MM/YYYY

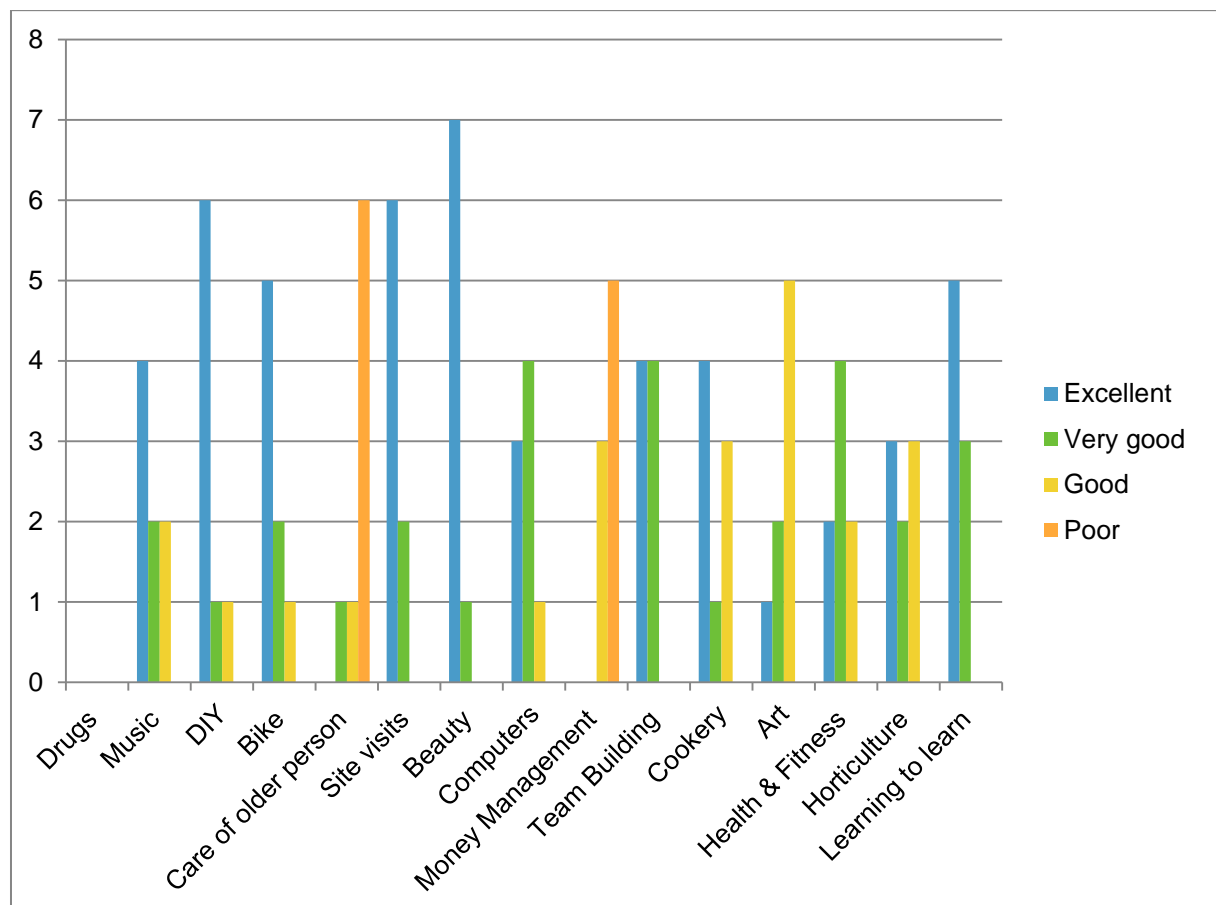
This CV was created together with **first name last name** as part of a basic training course (80 hours), which focused among other things on learning, biography work and assessment of competences.

Ireland

Overview Group 1

Original enrolment number was 14 of which 8 commenced.

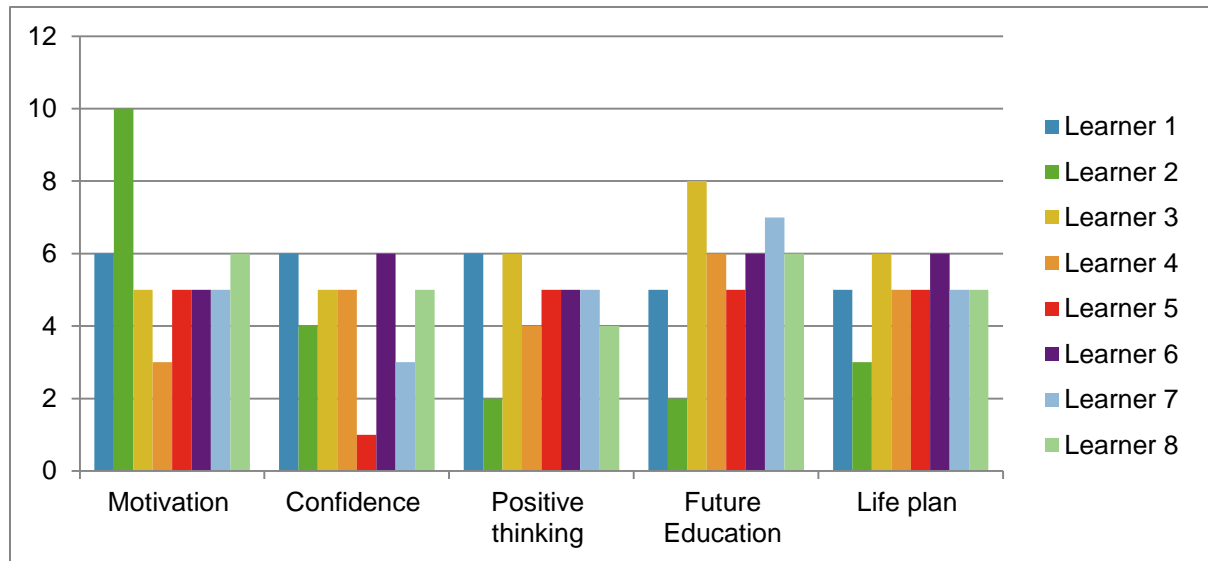
A full programme of varied activities was offered to group 1 and below is the evaluation of each module by the learners.



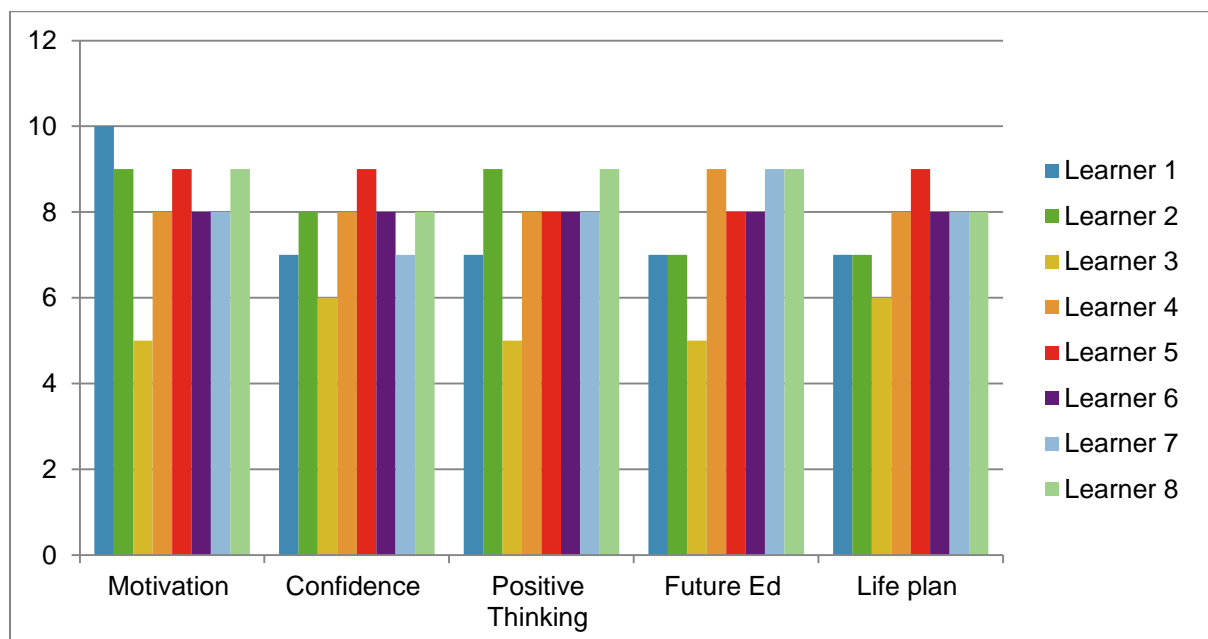
Wider Benefits of Learning:

At the beginning of the course the learners were asked what they would like to achieve from the course. They were asked where they saw themselves at that point. The learners were asked the same questions at the end of the course. Below is the table to show the progress each learner made during the course.

Start of Programme



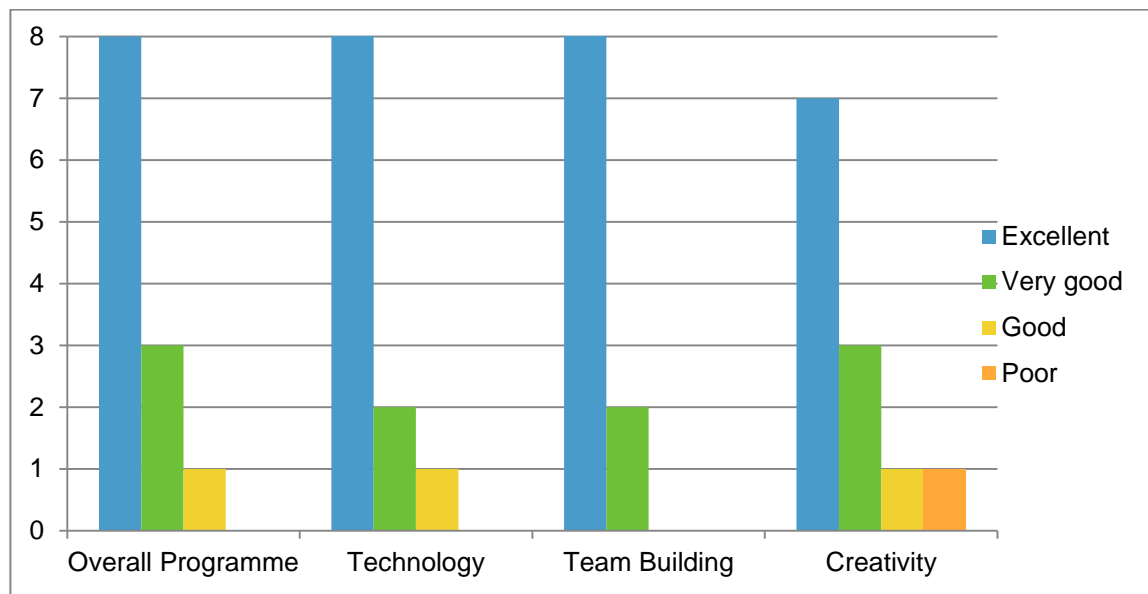
Close of Programme



Overview Group 2

Enrolment number was 12, 6 males and 6 females.

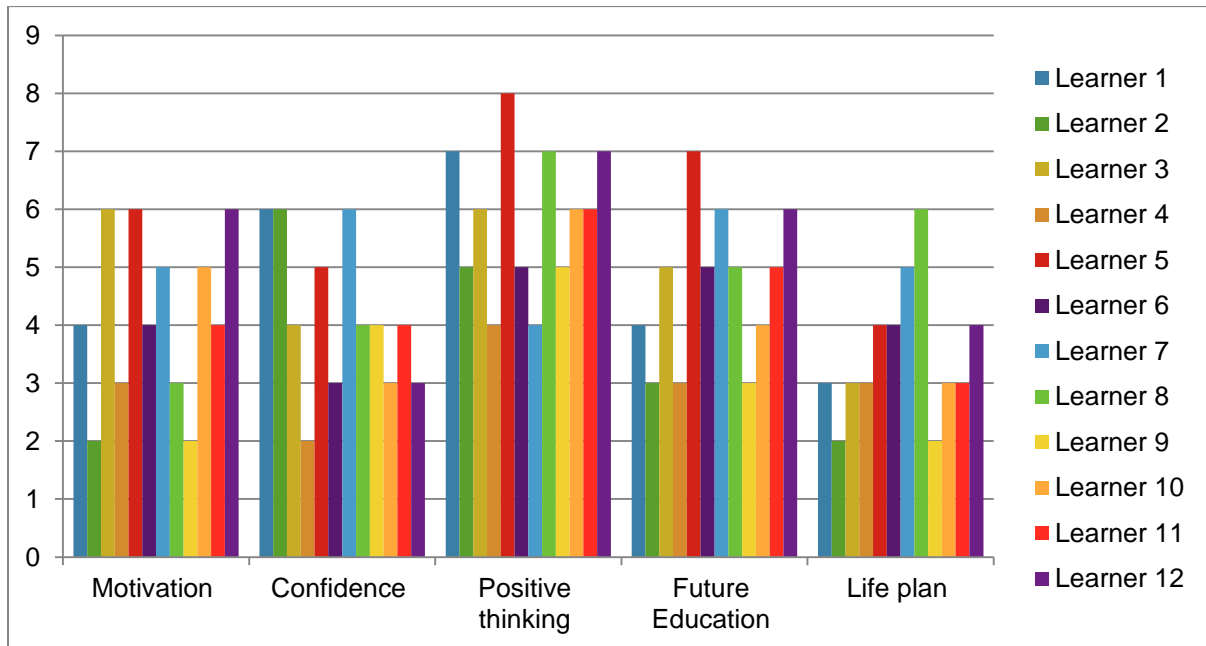
A media programme was offered to group 2 and below is the evaluation of core components by the learners.



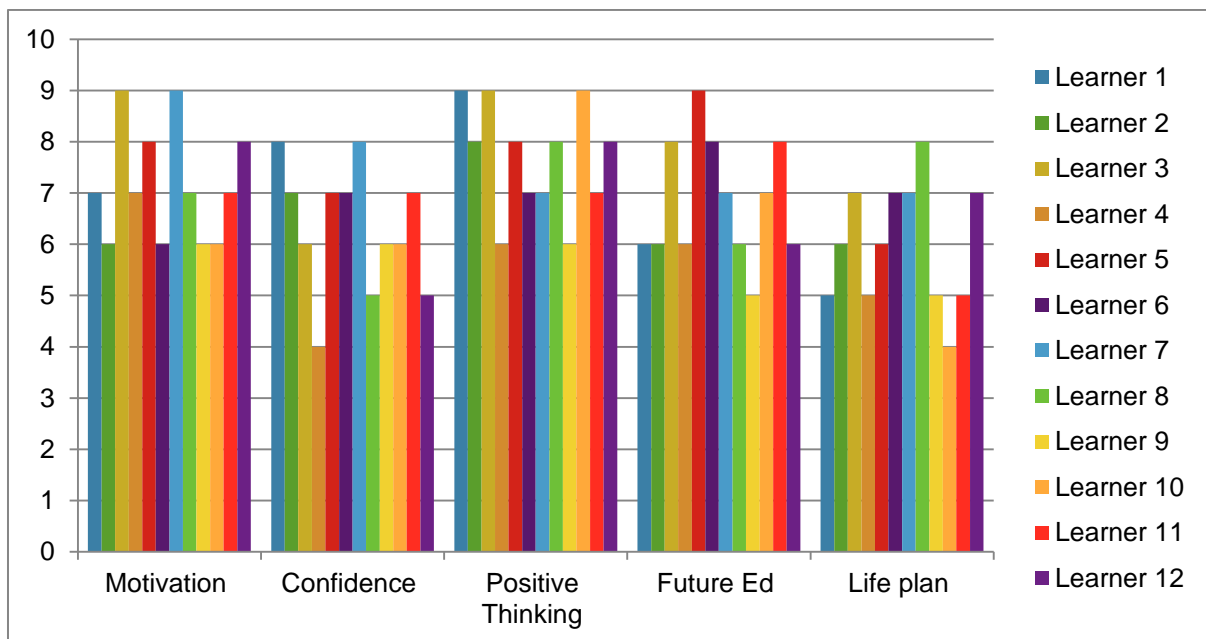
Wider Benefits of Learning:

At the beginning of the course the learners were asked what they would like to achieve from the course. They were asked where they saw themselves at that point. The learners were asked the same questions at the end of the course. Below is the table to show the progress each learner made during the course.

Start of Programme



Close of Programme



United Kingdom

Samples of Work










Where do you want to go with your life next? Write it in the cloud.

What's holding you back? Write it on the padlock.








What could you do to solve this? Write it on the key.



Sectors I am interested in:

	Professions	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Culture & Sport	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Crisis & Poverty	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Communities	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Crime & Justice	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Health & Social Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
	People, Youth & Family	<input type="checkbox"/>

Types of roles I am interested in:

	Practical	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Professional	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Promotion & fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Office	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Supporting others	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Technology & online	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Teaching & training	<input type="checkbox"/>

My availability:

Skills I can offer:

<p>Strengths</p>	<p>Weaknesses</p>
<p>Opportunities</p>	<p>Threats</p>